Concessional rates for big consumers of electric power.

85. MR. M. N. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Electrical Department gives any concessional rates to big consumers like municipalities, factories, etc.?

MR. K. P. PADMANABHA MENON (*Electrical Engineer to Government*): Yes. The municipality is charged for current only at 3½ annas a unit for the energy used for street lights, whereas ordinary consumers are charged at 6 annas a unit. Factories are charged at 1½ annas only per unit, subject to a minimum payment of Rs. 10 per month.

RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

PRESIDENT: The business before the House to-day is the discussion of resolutions. The first resolution stands in the name of Mr. H. O. L. Marikar.

SEPARATION OF CUSTOMS FROM EXCISE.

MR. H. O. L. MARIKAR (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*): Sir, the resolution I beg to move runs as follows:

"*This Council recommends to the Government that the customs be separated from the Excise.*"

Customs are of two kinds namely, the land customs and the sea customs. Customs are levied on a variety of articles both imported and exported, and they are for revenue purposes. Import and export duties are also levied for purposes of encouraging the home industries. But it seems to me that no such duties are levied at present in Travancore. I understand customs are levied almost for revenue purposes, and the amount to be levied is determined by Government from time to time.

The Excise Department is divided into four subsidiary departments, *viz.*, (1) salt, (2) tobacco, (3) abkari and opium, and (4) customs. It is expected that salt would give an income of Rs. 21 lakhs, tobacco, Rs. 23 lakhs and 19 thousand, abkari and opium Rs. 25 lakhs and 90 thousand, and customs, deducting Rs. 14 lakhs from the Cochin Port, is expected to give Rs. 29 lakhs and 20 thousand. So the income from customs tops the list.

About salt itself what I wish to submit is, Travancore has got great convenience to manufacture salt for consumption in Travancore. Now we are importing a large quantity of salt from Bombay and Tinnevelly. When we have large extra facilities to manufacture salt locally, it is unnecessary to import a large quantity from outside. In Britain and other places, people are attempting to make petrol from coal. If we cannot manufacture salt from sea water for our own use it is a great pity. The Excise Commissioner must devote his attention for the manufacture of salt locally and sell it in all parts of Travancore and stop the importation of foreign salt. He must also try to export home salt to other parts of India. I do not want the separation of the salt department at present.

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